

### Remarks

Claims 1-14 and 16-19 remain in the application. Claims 15 and 20 are hereby canceled without prejudice. Claims 1, 2, 5, 9-12, 16, 18, and 19 are hereby amended. No new matter is being added.

#### Claim Rejections -- 35 USC 103

Claims 1-20 were rejected as being unpatentable over Lo et al. in view of Suzuki et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection with respect to the claims as now amended.

Claim 1, as amended, now requires "applying a voltage to a conductive ring configured within said holding place such that the ring is around the inserted substrate". Support for this claim limitation is found, for example, in FIGS. 3B and 3C and the description thereof from page 5, line 14 through page 6, line 6.

Lo et al. does not disclose or suggest applying a voltage to a conductive ring configured within said holding place such that the ring is around the inserted substrate. Also, Suzuki et al. does not disclose or suggest applying a voltage to a conductive ring configured within said holding place such that the ring is around the inserted substrate.

Hence, applicants respectfully submit that for the above-discussed reasons claim 1, as now amended, is patentable over Lo et al. in view of Suzuki et al. Claims 2-8 depend from claim 1 and so are also patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 9, as amended, is now limited to "a conductive ring positioned so as to be located within a gap between an edge of the holding place and an edge of the substrate."

Lo et al. does not disclose or suggest a conductive ring positioned so as to be located within a gap between an edge of the holding place and an edge of the substrate. Also, Suzuki et al. does not disclose or suggest such a conductive ring.

Hence, applicants respectfully submit that for the above-discussed reasons claim 9, as now amended, is patentable over Lo et al. in view of Suzuki et al. Claims 10-14 and 16-17 depend from claim 9 and so are also patentable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 18, as amended, now recites that the means for reducing a wafer edge effect “comprises a conductive ring in said gap between the edge of the wafer and the edge of the wafer holder.”

Lo et al. does not disclose or suggest a conductive ring in said gap between the edge of the wafer and the edge of the wafer holder. Also, Suzuki et al. does not disclose or suggest such a conductive ring.

Hence, applicants respectfully submit that for the above-discussed reasons claim 18, as now amended, is patentable over Lo et al. in view of Suzuki et al. Claim 19 depends from claim 18 and so are also patentable for at least the same reasons.

Conclusion

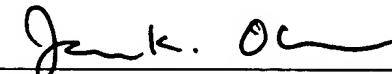
For the above-discussed reasons, applicants believe that claims 1-14 and 16-19, as now amended, are in patentable form. Favorable action is respectfully requested.

The examiner is also invited to call the below-referenced attorney to discuss this case.

Respectfully Submitted,

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